

# Neighborhood Business District Strategy

*Proposed Land Use Code Amendments*

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## **SEPA Checklist**





**City of Seattle**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST**

***REVISED***

**A. BACKGROUND:**

**1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:**

Neighborhood Business District Strategy – Land Use Code Amendments

**2. Name of Applicant:**

City of Seattle

**3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:**

Lish Richard Whitson  
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**4. Date checklist prepared:**

April 5, 2005

**5. Agency requesting checklist:**

City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development

**6. Proposed timing or schedule (include phasing if applicable):**

The amendments will likely be discussed in a public hearing and considered by the City Council in the first half of 2005.

**7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansions, or further activities related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain:**

Yes, the Land Use Code is regularly updated as required.

**8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal:**

Among the information that has been prepared to support the proposed amendments are:

1. Neighborhood Business District Strategy Draft Background Report (May 7, 2004)
2. Department of Planning and Development Director's Report (March 2005)

3. Department of Planning and Development Director's Report and Rezone Analysis (March 2005)

**9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain:**

It is possible there are pending applications for developments, rezones, and other actions in or near neighborhood business areas that are generally the subject of the proposed Land Use Code Amendments. However, the recommended outcome of this proposal is not expected to substantively alter decisionmaking on any individual pending application.

**10. List any governmental approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known:**

The proposed amendments will require adoption by the City Council.

**11. Give a brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.**

**Proposal Description**

This is a non-project proposal repealing the provisions in the City's Commercial Land Use Code (SMC 23.47), adopting a new Commercial Land Use Code (SMC 23.47A) and updating other sections of the land use code to ensure consistency with the new commercial land use code. The City of Seattle's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) is proposing a Neighborhood Business District Strategy (NBDS) in an effort to implement Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Plan goals. Consistent with those goals, the goals of the NBDS include supporting neighborhood business and job growth, protecting neighborhood character, improving the pedestrian environment, seeking quality design, supporting transit connections, and balancing parking needs with the other goals. As part of its effort to accomplish these goals, DPD is proposing amendments to the commercial chapter of the Land Use Code, which could affect potential development on properties in the commercial areas identified in Figure 1.

Development regulations that apply in Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial zones were originally adopted in 1986. Since then, repeated amendments to the Land Use Code have made it more complex and difficult to use. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Plans have since been adopted, placing new emphasis on business districts. This proposal would update City regulations pertaining to these zones.

In addition to improvements to the structure of the commercial chapter of the Land Use Code to make it easier to use; and amendments aimed at improving the City's processes, the proposal consists of the following categories of changes to the Land Use Code.

- Amendments to change some zoning designations on the City zoning map;
- Amendments to expand the uses allowed within the NC zones;
- Amendments to revise height, bulk, and density standards;
- Amendments to revise development standards;
- Amendments to simplify use categories;
- Amendments to revise parking requirements;
- Amendments to revise rezone criteria.

- Amendments to the *Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings* document to include additional guidance related to the streetfront in the Pedestrian Environment section.

The following is a summary of the major features of the proposed amendments.

### **Change Zoning Designations and Expand Allowed Uses within the Neighborhood Commercial Zones**

The proposed amendments to Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zones are aimed at encouraging a mix of commercial and residential uses and to allow greater opportunity for residential development within business zones. Among the amendments proposed are:

- Consolidating current Pedestrian 1 and Pedestrian 2 designations and mapping a single Pedestrian designation within Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zones based on field inventory and neighborhood plan recommendations. Non-residential uses would be required at street level within this designation. Current requirements for uses at street level in pedestrian designated zones would be expanded to allow medical services, lodging and some additional public and institutional uses that can support pedestrian activity and enliven streets such as parks and open space.
- Mapping Pedestrian designations in 6 urban villages (Admiral, Eastlake, Columbia City, Greenwood/Phinney Ridge, Lake City, and Madison-Miller) in order to implement neighborhood plans and provide a focus for street-level commercial activity at key locations in the urban villages.
- Removing the NC/R designation, consistent with changes proposed to specifically map and clearly identify where residential uses are permitted, and converting those areas to NC.
- Continue prohibiting residential uses at the ground level in commercial zones with height limits over 65 feet.
- Allowing residential uses at non-arterial street level in the NC1 zone, and prohibiting residential uses at street level along arterials.
- Allowing residential uses at street level in the NC2, NC3 and C1 zones without a conditional use review.
- Continue allowing residential uses only through a conditional use review process in C2 zones, revising the conditional use criteria so that they are easier to assess.

### **Revise Height, Bulk, and Density Standards**

The proposed amendments to height, bulk, and density standards are aimed at simplifying development standards to allow designs that better respond to a neighborhood's characteristics and to allow flexibility for residential development. Among the amendments proposed are:

- Using Gross Floor Area Ratio (FAR) limits for all uses, in place of the current 64% upper-story lot coverage requirement for housing, to regulate bulk and density and encourage such amenities as wider sidewalks, plazas, and sidewalk cafes.
- Allowing a slightly higher FAR limit for projects that mix uses, to reflect flexibility regularly granted through the design review program.
- Allowing additional FAR in transit station areas to focus development in these areas where current 64% upper-story lot coverage limits have previously been removed.

- Removing current residential density limits for residential-only buildings and, instead, using FAR limits to control residential density.

### **Revise Development Standards**

The proposed amendments to development standards are aimed at strengthening pedestrian-friendly orientation, maintaining current neighborhood-specific requirements, encouraging better design solutions for new buildings and open spaces, and reducing vacancies by encouraging in-fill of vacancies of under-used spaces. Among the amendments proposed are:

- Applying revised storefront transparency and blank façade requirements to commercial uses in all NC zones.
- Applying minimum height and depth standards which currently apply to ground floor commercial space in mixed-use structures to all ground floor commercial uses.
- Defining new street-front standards and design guidelines for ground floor residential uses to provide privacy and architectural interest along the street front.
- Allowing a modification of the street-front standards if a project under the design review threshold is able to maintain the safety and aesthetics of the streetscape without meeting those standards.
- Reducing driveways across main pedestrian streets by applying current pedestrian-designation standards to all NC zones.
- Applying the more limited P2 parking location standards to all NC zones in order to prevent parking lots along the street (including at corners). P1 parking location standards would be retained in the Pedestrian designations.
- Adding standards that improve pedestrian safety through parking lots. Separated pedestrian pathways to store entrances would be required for every 50 spaces in a surface parking lot, unless a pedestrian entrance to a building opens onto a sidewalk.
- Encouraging a mix of residential amenities, including ground-floor open space, balconies, shared indoor space, and an option for fees to fund off-site public open spaces in order to provide flexibility in providing required open space. The residential amenity requirement would be lowered from 20% to 10% of gross floor area across all commercial zones. While not proposed, lowering the residential amenity requirement to 5% of gross floor area is also contemplated under this checklist.

### **Revise Use Standards**

The proposed amendments to use standards are aimed at allowing for business expansion and turnover to help small business, encouraging timely leasing of commercial spaces, and allowing greater opportunity for residential development within business zones. Among the amendments proposed are:

- Simplifying the list of uses regulated in all zones including Single Family, Multifamily, Industrial, Downtown, and Shoreline areas and updating definitions to reflect new, simplified use categories.
- Simplifying conditional use criteria.
- Retaining the highest maximum size-of-use limits and removing lower limits and the current exception for expansions.
- Exempting existing buildings undergoing a change of use from new development standards (ground floor height and depth requirements). (Example: an existing

commercial building that adds residential units or a residential building that adds ground floor commercial space.)

### **Revise Parking Requirements**

The proposed amendments to parking requirements are aimed at supporting transit connections and balancing parking needs with the other goals. Lower standards are supported by new demand data, transit accessibility, and City goals to encourage people to minimize car usage. Among the amendments proposed are:

- Lowering parking requirements so that they are below average demand for parking in Seattle (rather than above).
- Removing minimum parking requirements for urban centers and station areas.
- Removing requirement for additional parking in existing buildings undergoing a change of use, when the amount of additional parking required is less than twenty spaces.
- Changing parking waivers from a per use waiver to a lower per business establishment waiver.
- Allowing accessory parking to be used as short-term parking for other uses.
- Setting maximum limits on the size of new surface parking lots.
- Establishing new short-term and long-term bicycle parking requirements.

### **Revise Rezone Criteria**

The proposed amendments to rezone criteria are aimed at simplifying rezone review, supporting the Comprehensive Plan's urban village strategy, and allowing for the rezone of auto-oriented areas to pedestrian-oriented zoning designations. Amendments are proposed to the NC1, NC2, NC3, C1, C2 and Pedestrian designation zone criteria. The rezone criteria for the P1, P2 and R designations are proposed to be eliminated, consistent with proposed elimination of these designations. In addition, the general rezone criteria are proposed to be amended so that the rezone of an overlay district that was first mapped because of a neighborhood plan does not require a Comprehensive Plan amendment.

### **Additions to the Design Guidelines**

Amendments to the *1998 Design Review: Guidelines for Multifamily and Commercial Buildings* document are proposed to include additional guidance related to the streetfront in the Pedestrian Environment section. They more explicitly address how new residential and commercial development treat the street front, providing guidance around such issues as entries, landscaping, detailing, signage, transparency, public space and parking.

12. **Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.**

This is a non-project proposal amending the provisions in the City's Commercial Land Use Code (SMC 23.47), which pertains to the entire City. The amendments would relate to all areas

that have commercial zoning designations, such as all neighborhood commercial (pedestrian-oriented) and commercial (auto-oriented) zones.

**B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS:**

**1. Earth**

**a. General description of site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other.**

All terrain present in Seattle's commercial zones (includes flat, rolling, hilly and steep slopes).

**b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal applying to all commercial zones. While Seattle's commercial areas are generally flat, some areas contain slopes exceeding 40%. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) and environmentally critical areas regulations as they move forward.

**c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal applying to all of Seattle's commercial zones. Almost all soils found in Seattle are found in commercial areas, including silt, sand, gravel, clay, peat, till, hardpan, sandstone, debris, and slag. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) and environmentally critical areas regulations as they move forward.

**d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal applying to all of Seattle's commercial zones. While Seattle's commercial areas are generally flat and stable, there are indications of unstable soils in some of Seattle's commercial areas and there have been landslides in Seattle's commercial areas. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) and environmentally critical areas regulations as they move forward.

**e. Describe the purpose, type and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction activity. The amount of filling or grading depends upon existing site conditions and usually is part of the site preparation. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) as they move forward.



- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction or use? If so, generally describe.**

Not applicable. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to increase development pressures in the commercial areas, or change the amount of clearing that would occur on any site. Potential impacts of specific development projects will be addressed through existing regulations and/or separate site-specific environmental review.

- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction activity. The amount of impervious surface coverage depends upon existing site conditions and site design of a project-specific action. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) as they move forward. The proposal would result in no greater amount of impervious covering compared to what existing zoning provisions allow.

- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion or other impacts to the earth, if any:**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction activity. The amount of erosion depends upon existing site conditions and site design of a project-specific action. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of measures to reduce or control erosion or other impacts to the earth at this stage. Such projects will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) as they move forward.

There are established policies and regulations to limit the potential of erosion and landslide impact of specific development proposals. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on surface water resources are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

## **2. Air**

- a. What type of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial, wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. No changes to odor standards are proposed. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) as they move forward.

The indirect effects of this non-project proposal to air resources are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Off-site sources of emissions or odors could exist in the vicinity of individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal.

**c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:**

There are established policies and regulations to minimize or prevent adverse air quality impacts of specific development projects, including regulations in the Commercial Land Use Code (23.47.020) which are not proposed to change as part of this non-project action. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of other measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air at this stage. Such projects will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) as they move forward.

**3. Water**

**a. Surface Water:**

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.**

Several water bodies in and around the commercial zones within the city of Seattle.

- 2) Will the project require any work over, in or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.**

No. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The proposed legislation is unlikely to affect the amount of fill or dredge required for site preparation in neighborhood commercial areas as compared to that allowed under existing regulations. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and other requirements as they move forward.

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Zoning and development regulation changes in the proposed legislation are unlikely to affect surface water withdrawal or diversion in neighborhood commercial areas as compared to that allowed under existing regulations. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and other requirements as they move forward.

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal and does not involve construction or development activity. Commercial areas are found within the floodplains along Thornton and Longfellow Creeks. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of

this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and other requirements as they move forward.

**6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.**

Not applicable. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on surface water resources are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**b. Ground Water:**

**1) Will groundwater be withdrawn or will water be discharged to groundwater? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Development regulation changes in the proposed legislation are unlikely to result in the withdrawal of or discharge to ground water as part of the site development for an individual project. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and other requirements as they move forward. New development will need to include adequate sanitary sewer connection and capacity, and stormwater controls.

**2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground for septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals...; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.**

Not applicable. The proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Commercial areas are served by sewer mains. The proposed legislation will not change existing regulations on septic tanks or waste material discharge. Future development projects will need to include adequate sanitary and stormwater sewer capacity and controls, and will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) and the City's stormwater and drainage requirements.

**c. Water Runoff (including storm water):**

**1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The amount of runoff and method of collection depends upon existing site conditions and site design of a project-specific action. Individual projects will be subject to the City's stormwater and drainage requirements and environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review.) Future development projects will need to meet treatment requirements prior to connection to City storm sewer systems. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal related to water runoff are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this

proposal will be subject to the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and the City's stormwater and drainage requirements and environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review.) Future development projects will need to demonstrate that stormwater and wastewater requirements have been met. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal related to water runoff are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground or runoff water impacts, if any:**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. There are established policies and regulations to protect wetlands, riparian corridors, lakes, drainage basins, wildlife habitats, slopes, and other property from adverse drainage impacts of specific development projects. New construction will need to comply with the City's Stormwater, Grading & Drainage Control Ordinance and provide for mitigation of erosion, if required. Individual projects will also be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

**4. Plants**

**a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:**

- ☒ Deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
- ☒ Evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
- ☒ Shrubs
- ☒ Grass
- ☐ Pasture
- ☐ Crop or grain
- ☐ Wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bulrush, skunk cabbage, other
- ☐ Water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- ☒ Other types of vegetation

Most terrestrial vegetation types listed above could be found in commercial areas in the City.

**b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?**

Not applicable. The proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The amount of vegetation removal depends upon existing site conditions and project-specific site design. The proposed legislation is unlikely to affect the amount of vegetation removed or altered compared to that allowed under existing regulations.

Individual development projects that may utilize the proposed legislation's zoning and development regulation changes will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, Significant Trees Ordinance, and other regulations. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on vegetation are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site:**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. The proposed legislation is unlikely to have a different affect on threatened or endangered plant species than existing regulations. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposed legislation will be

subject to the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, which requires identification of threatened or endangered species on or near individual project sites.

**d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Development standards and design guidelines are in place and proposed that support the use of native plants and other vegetation on specific development projects where appropriate. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of landscaping or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation at this stage. Such projects will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), and will be subject to the City's existing requirements for screening and buffers.

**5. Animals**

**a. Circle any birds and animals that have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:**

Seattle commercial areas are developed and urban in character. Birds observed in Seattle include hawk, eagle, songbirds, crow, starling, seagulls, pigeons, heron, Canadian Geese, and other birds. Mammals observed include squirrels, raccoons, the opossum, other small rodents, feral cats, stray dogs, and household pets.

This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of specific animals present in commercial areas at this stage.

**b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Individual development sites have not been determined. Some commercial zones are near Lake Washington, where several endangered species are known to be found, including: Chinook salmon, Bull trout, bald eagle, Oregon spotted frog, long-eared myotis, long-legged myotis, northwestern pond turtle, olive-sided flycatcher, and Pacific Townsend's big-eared bat. However, no specific threatened or endangered species are known to exist within commercial zones themselves. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on animals are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Seattle commercial areas are developed and urban in character.

Seattle is within the "Pacific Flyway," one of the four principal north-south migration routes for birds (including Canadian Geese heron, and other birds) in North America. The Pacific Flyway encompasses the entire Puget Sound Basin. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot currently be evaluated in terms of impacts on migration routes. Such projects will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), and the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance for habitat protection.

**d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Policies are in place to encourage the maintenance of fish and wildlife habitat for specific development projects where appropriate.

Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of measures to preserve or enhance wildlife at this stage. Such projects will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), and the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance for habitat protection.

**6. Energy and Natural Resources**

**a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing etc.**

Not applicable. The proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The area is served by electric and natural gas utilities. New development is likely to use these sources of energy. Future development projects that may use the proposed legislation's zoning or development regulation changes are unlikely to require different types of energy sources under the new provisions than under the existing provisions.

Individual projects and development consistent with this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of energy requirements at this stage. Such projects will be subject to subsequent environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

**b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.**

Not applicable. The proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity.

Projects and development consistent with this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of impacts to adjacent properties at this stage. Individual development projects that utilize the proposed legislation's zoning and development regulation changes will be subject to environmental review and design review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) for height, bulk, and scale impacts.

**c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of energy conservation features or measures to reduce or control energy impacts at this stage. Such projects will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) and will need to meet the City's energy code requirements. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on energy resources are addressed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**7. Environmental Health**

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Zoning or development regulation changes in the proposed legislation are unlikely to result in environmental health hazards as part of the site development for an individual project.

Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will be subject to the City's Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review,) and other requirements.

- 1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The amount of potential residential growth in commercial zones zone is within the range covered by the City of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan for Fire Protection and Police Services. In general, emergency service providers including the Fire and Police Departments will review the effects of increased development and propose enhanced services as necessary as part of their planning for future service needs. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to result in an increased need for emergency services. See discussion in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of special emergency services required at this stage. Such projects will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), and will need to meet the City's concurrency requirements for public services infrastructure.

- 2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to result in an increase of environmental health hazards.

Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards at this stage. Such projects will be subject to project-specific environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review), building code, and other public health and safety requirements. See discussion in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**b. Noise**

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Ambient noise typical of urban areas exists in Seattle's neighborhood business districts. The extent of existing traffic and other noise affecting

a given development project, will be assessed through project-specific environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

**2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction activity. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to increase noise impacts.

Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of noise impacts at this stage. Such projects will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) as they move forward. See discussion in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity. Existing noise standards and regulations in the Commercial Land Use Code (SMC 23.47.018) would be retained and would not change as part of this proposal.

Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of measures to reduce or control noise impacts at this stage. Such projects will be subject to project-specific environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

**8. Land and Shoreline Use**

**a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?**

Uses currently permitted in the three pedestrian-oriented Neighborhood Commercial zones (NC1, NC2, and NC3) include: retail sales and services, offices, institutional and residential uses. These three neighborhood commercial areas differ in the intensity of these permitted uses. These areas are described below:

- The NC1 zones are typically small areas where businesses provide convenience retail and services to the adjoining neighborhoods. (The biggest of these areas include the business districts at Alki, Seward Park, Maple Leaf, and Madison Park.)
- The NC2 zones are pedestrian-oriented shopping areas that provide a full range of household and personal goods and services, including convenience and specialty goods to the surrounding neighborhoods, for example, Wallingford, Queen Anne, 23<sup>rd</sup> and Union, and Admiral business districts.
- The NC3 zones are intended to serve both surrounding neighborhood and a larger community or citywide clientele. They allow for a wide range of retail goods and services and often provide offices and business support services. (Broadway, Lake City, and Uptown Queen Anne all have large concentrations of the NC3 zone, for example.)



Uses currently permitted in auto-oriented General Commercial zones (C1, C2) include the uses allowed in the NC zones, but also allow more intensive commercial and industrial uses such as wholesale showrooms, mini-warehouses, outdoor storage and certain manufacturing uses. These two general commercial areas differ in the intensity of these permitted uses. These areas are described below:

- The C1 areas are auto-oriented, primarily retail/service commercial areas that serve surrounding neighborhoods and the larger community or citywide clientele. These areas include retail, offices and business support services, and residential uses at limited densities. (For example, North Rainier, University Village and much of the Aurora Avenue corridor include C1 zoning.)
- The C2 areas are auto-oriented, primarily non-retail commercial areas that provide a wide range of commercial activities serving a citywide function. These areas provide offices, business support services and locations for light manufacturing and warehouse uses. Residential uses are discouraged in C2 areas. (Examples include west Lake Union, south end of Chinatown/International District, Duwamish Industrial area, most of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue South in South Park, and the Mercer/Valley Street corridor.)

**b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Commercial zones have not been used for agriculture other than those found in “P-patches” in recent history.

**c. Describe any structures on the site.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Seattle's commercial zones contain a wide range and extensive number of structures and are urban in form.

**d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?**

Not applicable. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to increase the rate of demolition.

**e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?**

Zoning within the areas affected by the proposed amendments includes Neighborhood Commercial 1,2, and 3 zones (NC1, NC2, and NC3), and auto-oriented General Commercial 1 and 2 zones (C1 and C2).

**f. What is current comprehensive plan designation of the site?**

Comprehensive plan designation of the areas affected by the proposed amendments is Commercial/Mixed Use inside and outside of Urban Centers, Urban Center Villages, Hub Urban Villages and Residential Urban Villages. Approximately 69% of Seattle's commercial zones are located within Urban Centers and Villages.

**g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?**

All Conservancy and Urban shoreline designations within Seattle's commercial zones.

- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.**  
Some areas within the C and NC zones may be classified as environmentally sensitive. See also City's critical areas maps.
- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?**  
Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. According to targets in Seattle's Comprehensive Plan, up to 30,000 additional employees and up to 30,000 additional residents could locate in Seattle's Commercial areas in the next twenty years. These numbers are not expected to change based on the proposal.
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?**  
Not applicable. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to increase the rate and extent at which residences or businesses are displaced.
- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:**  
Not applicable. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to increase the rate or extent at which residences or businesses are displaced.
- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:**  
Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal intended to achieve greater compatibility of the Commercial Land Use Code (SMC 23.47) with existing Comprehensive and Neighborhood Plans. Minor non-substantive amendments are proposed to other sections of the land use code, including the Shoreline area regulations in order to ensure compatibility and consistency with the proposed changes to the Commercial land use code. See discussion in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**9. Housing**

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**  
Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Approximately 20,000 housing units may be built in Seattle's commercial areas over the next twenty years. Individual projects that may utilize the provisions of this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of affordability at this stage.
- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**  
Not applicable. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to change the rate of demolition of housing in commercial zone and may increase residential development in certain commercial areas.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:**  
Not applicable. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal are not expected to result in increased housing impacts.

**10. Aesthetics**

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal and does not include any construction or development activity. No changes to the existing height limits are being proposed. Projects and development consistent with this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of exterior building materials at this stage.

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Projects and development consistent with this proposal will occur over time and cannot be evaluated in terms of view alteration at this stage.

Individual development projects that utilize the proposed legislation's zoning and development regulation changes will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) for height, bulk and scale impacts and the City's Design Review Program.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:**

Proposed amendments to the design guidelines are intended to improve the aesthetics of street front spaces in commercial zones for buildings that are subject to the design review process, including both residential and commercial structures.

The indirect effects of other changes may improve aesthetic impacts of new development in commercial zones. See discussion in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**11. Light and Glare**

- a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Existing light and glare standards (SMC 23.47.022) are not proposed to be changed. Projects and development that utilize the proposed legislation's zoning and development regulation changes will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) for light and glare impacts.

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Projects and development that utilize the proposed legislation's zoning and development regulation changes will be subject to regulations and environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) for light and glare impacts.

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Ambient light and glare typical of urban areas exist in Seattle's neighborhood business districts. The extent of light and glare affecting a given development project will be assessed through project-specific environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

**d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Established policies and regulations to minimize or prevent hazards and other adverse light and glare impacts of specific development projects will not change. Projects and development that utilize the proposed legislation's zoning and development regulation changes will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) for light and glare impacts.

**12. Recreation**

**a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?**

There are parks and other designated and informal recreational opportunities within and near Seattle's commercial areas. In addition, each project with residential uses is currently required to provide on-site recreation space.

**b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal which is not likely to change the potential displacement of any existing recreational uses. Future residential structures in commercial areas would likely provide less on-site outdoor recreation area than is provided under the current regulations. However, greater flexibility for how on-site residential amenity space is provided is likely to result in more usable and more frequently used recreation space.

Projects and development that utilize the proposed legislation's zoning and development regulation changes will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) for recreation impacts. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on recreational opportunities are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Individual projects will continue to be required to provide on-site residential amenity space. Projects and development that utilize the proposed legislation's zoning and development regulation changes will be subject to environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review) for impacts on recreation.

**13. Historical and Cultural Preservation**

**a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.**

There are four City of Seattle landmark or special review districts (Ballard, Columbia City, International District, Harvard/Belmont) which include some commercially-zoned land and 32 designated City of Seattle Landmarks located within Seattle's commercial areas. There may be other state or national landmarks in Seattle's commercial areas.

**b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site?**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Individual projects and development that utilize the proposed legislation's zoning and development regulation changes will be subject to the City's regulations related to historic and archaeologically significant

landmarks as well as environmental review (if they meet or exceed thresholds for environmental review).

**c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any:**

Not applicable. The indirect impacts of this non-project proposal on historic and cultural resources are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions. There are established policies and regulations to maintain and preserve significant historic sites and structures and to provide the opportunity for analysis of archaeological sites during review of specific development projects. Projects involving structures or sites which have been designated as historic landmarks are subject to compliance with the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance.

**14. Transportation**

**a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe the proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.**

The entire street network within the City's commercial zones.

**b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?**

Not applicable. This is a non-project proposal. Generally, Seattle's commercial zones are well served by public transit in terms of both frequency of transit stops and headways.

**c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?**

Not applicable. The direct and indirect effects of this non-project proposal, which reduces requirements for on-site parking in commercial zones, are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and is not expected to require new roads or streets.

**e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action. Indirect effects of the proposal are not likely to affect water or air transportation. The proposal is designed to indirectly increase light rail and monorail use when these systems are in place.

**f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.**

Not applicable. The direct and indirect effects of this non-project proposal on vehicle trips are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:**

Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action designed to reduce vehicular traffic impacts in neighborhood business districts, increase pedestrian and non-motorized transportation; and increase transit (light rail, monorail, and bus) use.

**15. Public Services**

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.**  
Not applicable. The proposed amendments are not expected to change potential demand for public services. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on public services are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.
- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.**  
Not applicable. This proposal is a non-project action and does not involve construction or development activity.

**16. Utilities**

- a. Utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.**  
Seattle commercial zones are extensively developed and are served by all the utilities listed above except for septic systems. Other utilities available include cable television and internet access.
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed:**  
Not applicable. The proposed amendments are not expected to change potential demand for utility services or the specific services to be provided, which are decided on a site-by-site basis. The indirect effects of this non-project proposal on utilities are discussed in Section D, Supplemental Sheet for Non-project Actions.

**C. SIGNATURE**

Signature provided following section D below.

**D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NON-PROJECT ACTIONS**

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering the questions, be aware of the extent of the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

**1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?**

The proposed amendments to the Land Use Code would be unlikely to result in any major changes to the rate of development or patterns of development in the commercial areas of the City. As a result it is expected that the potential for increased impacts to water, air, or noise or additional release of hazardous substances is expected to be minor.

In the short-term, the reduced parking requirements associated with the proposed amendments could increase congestion in some business neighborhoods resulting in increased vehicular emissions and noise. These increases would be expected to stabilize as travel modes shift from vehicle trips to passenger or pedestrian trips. In the long-term it is expected that overall vehicular emissions and noise will be reduced as neighborhood business areas become more pedestrian-friendly and less auto dependent in character.

**Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:**

As discussed above, the potential for indirect impacts of this non-project proposal are expected to be minor. The existing regulatory framework, i.e., the Land Use Code, The Shoreline Master Program, Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and the City's SEPA ordinance will address impacts during review of development proposals on a project-specific basis. Proposals to limit the size of surface parking lots are expected to help reduce run-off of pollutants from impervious surfaces.

**2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish or marine life?**

The proposed amendments to the Land Use Code would be unlikely to result in any major changes to the rate of development or patterns of development in the commercial areas of the City. As a result, the potential for increased environmental impacts to plants, animals, fish or marine life is low. On a site-by-site basis, future development projects could potentially result in plant and animal impacts as a result of clearing vegetation or habitat that may be present on these sites.

**Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:**

As discussed above, the potential for indirect impacts of this non-project proposal are expected to be minor. The existing regulatory framework, i.e., the Land Use Code, The Shoreline Master Program, Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and the City's SEPA ordinance will address impacts during review of development proposals on a project-specific basis.

**3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?**

The proposed amendments to the Land Use Code would be unlikely to result in any major changes to the rate of development or patterns of development in the commercial areas of the City. As a result, the potential for increased depletion of energy and natural resources is low.

**Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:**

In the long-term the proposed amendments are specifically designed to reduce consumption of fossil fuels and conserve natural resources by encouraging projects to locate in existing developed urban areas.

**4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened, or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?**

Future development on specific parcels could potentially result in effects to historic sites and districts that are located in the commercial and neighborhood commercial zones. Future development has a low potential to affect environmentally sensitive areas, parks, wetlands, or floodplains, since these types of areas are limited within the highly developed commercial areas of the City.

**Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:**

The existing regulatory framework, i.e., the Land Use Code, The Shoreline Master Program, Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, Landmarks Preservation Ordinance and the City's SEPA ordinance will address impacts during review of development proposals on a project-specific basis.

**5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land and shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?**

The proposed amendments to the Land Use Code would be unlikely to result in any major changes to the rate of development or patterns of development in the commercial areas of the City. The objectives of the NBDS and its proposed amendments are moderate adjustments to the existing commercial regulations to clarify and further goals of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan's urban center and village strategies and Neighborhood Plans. As a result the NBDS proposal is unlikely to have major effects to land and shoreline use. The effects to land and shoreline use from the proposed amendments are described below. Additional analysis is provided in Appendix 2, NBDS Potential Land Use and Housing Impacts.

Land and Shoreline Use

The NBDS proposal does not propose any major changes in zoning designations, or rezones to, or from, residential or industrial zones, and does not propose changes to the primary role of commercial zones as places where business is conducted and goods and services provided. Because there are no major changes in zoning designations or requirements, there would be only minor increases in the potential for incompatibility with adjacent uses. The proposed amendments are also intended to improve processes such as design review, which provide for flexibility to make adjustments at a neighborhood scale.



The proposed amendments strengthen opportunities for redevelopment within the commercial zoning districts by removing some limitations on residential development, increasing the variety of uses that would be allowed at street level in the commercial zones, and by reducing the amount of parking that is required to be provided on small sites. Over the short-term, existing neighborhoods could potentially experience impacts resulting from construction and redevelopment on a project-by-project basis, particularly in transit station areas. However, these increased impacts would be more likely to result from current redevelopment associated with light rail and monorail projects than from these proposed Code amendments.

The relaxation of parking requirements for changing the use of existing businesses could result in some minor increased turnover. This could result in reducing vacancies in commercial areas through speedier in-fill of vacant or underused spaces.

Removing the NC/R designation and converting those areas to NC would allow for single-purpose residential buildings in NC2, NC3 and C1 zones outside of pedestrian designated areas. This provision could result in a minor increase in housing supply. Providing for residential development in commercial areas is intended to improve the vitality of the commercial areas and meet growth management goals to provide housing opportunities in areas close to transit, jobs, and commercial goods and services. The conditional use process would continue to provide a review mechanism to ensure that conflicts between intensive commercial uses and residential development do not occur in the C2 zones.

In allowing residential use at ground level within NC zones, it is anticipated that housing would replace what may otherwise be vacant store fronts where market factors may not support commercial enterprises. In transit station areas, the proposed amendments would allow additional residential density, further encouraging residential development, particularly housing above ground-level. Residential development would also be encouraged through amendments that provide more flexibility, especially in meeting open space requirements. Residential density would be controlled through the use of FAR limits instead of the current 64% lot coverage limit. It is anticipated that this may create an incentive for developing smaller units, thereby increasing housing supply.

#### Neighborhood Character

The proposal includes improvements to development regulations that affect the bulk and scale of development in commercial zones. FAR limits would be used to regulate bulk and density, providing more flexibility than the existing regulations. Use of FAR limits is intended to encourage more diverse opportunities for uses to enhance the street level by providing space for wider sidewalks, plazas, or sidewalk cafes. The current 64% upper-story lot coverage requirement is often modified or waived in the Design Review process. The modification or waivers allow for flexibility in massing a structure to better fit the context of the site and to provide for greater housing density. The use of FAR is a flexible tool in regulating bulk and density and is currently used in higher density zones in Seattle.

While in some cases these regulations could result in incompatible street-level bulk, other street-level façade requirements as well as the design review process and amendments to the design guidelines that apply to street level spaces are expected to offset the impact. In a few instances, the proposed change will result in buildings that have less bulk, especially for buildings that would exceed 85 feet in height. All other buildings would be subject to current

height restrictions in the Land Use Code, including existing provisions to allow up to 7 additional feet to accommodate well-designed commercial development, which is permitted when mixed use buildings incorporate higher floor to ceiling heights at street level. Development standards and design review would control impacts due to incompatible height proposals on a case-by-case basis.

In all commercial zones, mixed-use commercial space standards would be applied to all ground floor commercial uses. New street-front standards and design guidelines for ground floor residential uses are proposed to provide for privacy and visual interest. The proposal would include flexibility in applying the open space requirement in order to encourage a mix of amenities for residents, including ground-floor open space, balconies, shared indoor space, and an option for fees for offsite public open spaces. In addition, open space requirements would be lowered from 20 percent to 5 or 10 percent of gross floor area. The proposed amendments could reduce the amount of on-site open space required, but could result in increased public open space provided in offsite areas.

In all neighborhood commercial zones, there would be storefront transparency and blank façade requirements to reduce potential aesthetic impacts. The application of current pedestrian-designation standards to provide for a reduction in driveways across main pedestrian streets would provide for more commercial frontage and reduce vehicular/pedestrian conflicts. Requiring parking to be located in, under, or to the rear of structures, would be used to prevent parking between buildings and the street, to encourage a better pedestrian environment.

The proposed amendments are intended to result in development that is more compatible with the character and design of the surrounding community. The regulations would create more incentives for flexibility in the design of mixed-use developments and would have an overall beneficial impact on neighborhood character and aesthetics.

**Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:**

Design review based on adopted standards and guidelines will be required for development which has the potential to impact adjacent properties and the neighborhood character. New design guidelines are proposed to help integrate street-level residential structures into the commercial street front. Setback requirements for structures abutting or across from residentially zoned lots continue to apply. Conditional use approval will continue to be necessary for residential development in C2 zones to ensure conflicts between heavy commercial and residential uses do not occur. Commercial uses would be required at street-level along arterials in the NC1 zone to ensure that commercial uses remain in the most visible locations in a neighborhood's commercial district. Incentives, including parking waivers for small commercial spaces and density incentives for mixed-use buildings, will be provided to encourage street-level commercial uses in locations where they are viable. Development above SEPA thresholds will continue to be reviewed on a project basis and any impacts identified and mitigated as part of the project's SEPA decision.

**6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?**

None of the proposed amendments to NC zoning, height, bulk, density standards, or use standards are expected to result in significant adverse impacts to traffic or parking or public services and utilities. While a few of the proposed amendments to development standards and

parking requirements could result in either increased traffic or increased parking demand in some areas, the overall effect to traffic and parking is expected to be negligible. Impacts from amendments that would change development standards and parking requirements are described below. Additional analysis is provided in Appendix 3, NBDS Parking and Traffic Impacts.

#### Transportation and Parking

The proposed amendments would lower required parking requirements, set maximum parking limits for certain land uses, and provide parking waivers for certain uses in certain areas. For all of the land use categories, larger projects (greater than 4,000 sf in the NC zones, greater than 12,000 sf in the C zones, and those that include parking of 20 or more spaces) would be subject to project-level SEPA review. SEPA analysis would consider individual demand characteristics of a project and the context of the site. Projects located in neighborhoods where there is limited on-street parking available are more likely to provide enough on-site parking to make the project economically viable. The combination of SEPA review and market forces will combine to mitigate potential adverse parking effects for the larger projects. For smaller projects that are not subject to SEPA review or for developers who do not conform to market forces, the proposed amendments could result in minor parking impacts for certain land use categories. Retail uses, restaurants, research and development laboratories and commercial-area multifamily uses would all have lower parking requirements than current regulations. However, for most land use categories, the proposed amendments are consistent with the actual or expected demand and no new adverse parking impacts are expected.

The proposed amendments include removing minimum parking requirements for urban centers and station areas and existing buildings. These changes would have no effect on on-street parking if parking around the station area is managed with time restrictions, parking meters, and/or residential parking zones (RPZ). Market conditions will likely set the parking supply for individual buildings. Managed on-street parking could adversely affect existing businesses' employee parking needs but also improve the supply of short-term parking for customers. The need to manage parking would be related to the station impacts and not the amendments to the Land Use Code. Additionally, the change to allow accessory parking as short-term parking for other uses could help create more parking for customers, having a positive impact for businesses in commercial zones and helping reduce spillover and on-street impacts.

The proposed amendments would reduce driveways across main pedestrian streets, by applying current pedestrian-designation standards to all NC zones. This change could increase traffic on side streets and alleys and could force some traffic into residential neighborhoods, but could also free-up on-street parking spaces. Project that are exempt from SEPA analysis are likely have small impacts on the side streets. Larger projects (greater than 4,000 sf in the NC zones and greater than 12,000 sf in the C zones) will evaluate side-street operations and potential for cut-through traffic into residential areas as part of their SEPA process. Developers of individual projects that could generate enough traffic to create an impact would have to evaluate their impacts and provide mitigation if necessary.

The proposed amendments include eliminating requirements for additional parking in existing buildings undergoing a change in use when the change of use would result in an increased requirement for parking of twenty spaces or fewer.

In the long-term it is expected that overall traffic demand on city streets will be reduced as neighborhood business areas become more pedestrian-friendly and less auto dependent in character.

Public Services and Utilities

Since the proposed amendments are not anticipated to result in any major changes to the rate of development or patterns of development in the commercial areas of the City, the project is not anticipated to have a substantial effect on public services or utilities. Some additional use of public parks and recreation centers could potentially result from lowering the on-site open space requirement. Some on-site open space would still be required, and because more flexibility in what types of spaces can qualify for the open space, the types of spaces provided may better respond to the types of spaces that residents are likely to use. In downtown Seattle, where a 5% requirement is currently in place, a wide range of different on-site recreation and open space facilities are provided. In addition, allowing payment of a fee in lieu of providing on-site open space could increase public open space opportunities.

**Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demands are:**

Changes in the mix of uses in the commercial areas could be expected to occur on a project-by-project basis. Public services and utilities can be accommodated when change is of an incremental nature. Policies are in place that ensure that proposed land developments do not cause or increase associated public services without contributing appropriate mitigation towards the impacts.

**7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.**

No conflicts are anticipated with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for protection of the environment.

**SIGNATURE:**

I, the undersigned, state that to the best of my knowledge the above information is true and complete. It is understood that the lead agency may withdraw any declaration of non-significance that it might issue in reliance upon this checklist should there be any willful misrepresentation or willful lack of full disclosure on my part.

(Signature on File)  
Lish Whitson  
Senior Urban Planner

April 5, 2005  
Date

# Appendix 1

## NBDS POTENTIAL LAND USE AND HOUSING IMPACTS



# NBDS Potential Land Use and Housing Impacts

## Technical Memorandum

October 2004

Prepared For:

City of Seattle  
Department of Planning and Development

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PREPARED BY:

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# TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Project: Seattle Neighborhood Business District Strategy

Subject: NBDS Potential Land Use and Housing Impacts

Date: October 19, 2004

From: Greg Easton, Property Counselors

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## Introduction

The draft proposal Neighborhood Business District Strategy recommends changes to the City's commercial land use code in the pursuit of eight objectives.

- A. Support Business Vitality and Job Creation
- B. Achieve Quality Design through Development Flexibility
- C. Protect and Enhance Neighborhood Character
- D. Support Transit Connections
- E. Improve the Pedestrian Environment
- F. Balance Parking Needs
- G. Provide Housing Growth in Neighborhood Business Districts
- H. Make the Land Use Code Easier to Use

The recommendations include a range of actions:

- Maintain certain development and nuisance standards.
- Designate pedestrian areas where ground floor commercial is required and ground floor residential is restricted.
- Revise height, bulk and density standards.
- Revise development standards for streetfronts, parking and driveways, pedestrian pathways and sidewalks, and building amenities.
- Revise standards for maximum size of use and change of use.
- Lower parking requirements.
- Make Code easier to use.
- Improve City's processes.

This memo addresses land use impacts and the extent to which any of these recommendations affect the amount and type of residential and commercial development that is likely to result. The specific recommendations that are addressed here are those related to:

- 1) Provision for Single Use Residential.
- 2) Density Limits for Residential.
- 3) Floor Area Ratios.

## Provisions for Single Use Residential

Single use residential buildings in commercial zones can contribute to the objective of providing housing growth and supporting business vitality by increasing the purchasing power in the local area. Such buildings can also inhibit business vitality if they occupy prime commercial sites.

The recommended changes can be summarized as follows:

### Provisions for Single Use Residential

Zone	Currently	Proposed
NCR (as designated in response to community plans).	Allowed Outright	Designation to be eliminated
NC1	Allowed as Conditional Use	Restrict to sites that do not abut arterials
C2	Allowed as Conditional Use	Change conditions to restrict on arterials and near heavy commercial uses
NC2/NC3	Allowed as Conditional Use, Prohibited in Pedestrian designated Zones P1, P2	Expand pedestrian designation; Allowed outside Pedestrian designation

Prime commercial sites are those with easy access and good visibility from surrounding streets (particularly arterials) and sidewalks. As long as the new pedestrian designation and the conditional use process both properly distinguish between the suitable and unsuitable sites, the recommendations should contribute to both the residential and commercial vitality objectives.

## Density Limits for Residential

The current code prescribes a limit on density for single use residential projects.

### Minimum Site Area per Residential Unit

Zone	Height Limit	Inside Urban Village	Outside of Urban Village
NC 1/2/3	30'	700 sq. ft./unit	800 sq. ft./unit
NC 1/2/3	40'	500 sq. ft./unit	600 sq. ft./unit
NC 1/2/3	65'	400 sq. ft./unit	600 sq. ft./unit
NC 1/2/3	Over 65'	Prohibited	Prohibited
NC/R	Any Height	None	None
C1/C2	Any Height	1,000 sq. ft./unit	1,000 sq. ft./unit
C1/C2 built to NC standards	Any Height	See NC Standards	1,000 sq. ft./unit

Mixed use projects are not subject to a density limit. The proposed strategy would eliminate the density limit for single use residential as well.

A density limit can discourage the development of smaller units, particularly studio and one bedroom units. Two studio apartments at 600 square feet per unit provide the same building area as one two bedroom unit. A project can maximize its building envelope while avoiding the density restriction by developing larger units.

The average density and unit size for projects developed in Seattle between 1995 and 2002 are compared for mixed use and single use projects are compared in the following table.

**Density and Unit Size Comparison  
Commercial Zone Residential Projects in Seattle  
1995 – 2002**

	NC1	NC2	NC3	C1	C2
Number of Projects					
Mixed Use	25	55	32	30	6
Single Use	1	2	7	13	0
Density (Lot SF per Unit)					
Mixed Use	630	513	457	475	1,062
Single Use	3,003	1,659	687	1,964*	N/A
Unit Size (Building SF per Unit)					
Mixed Use	1,145	1,269	1,283	1,284	2,147
Single Use	1,291	2,322	916	1,161*	N/A

\*Data for single use residential projects in C1 adjusted to exclude special purpose projects and projects with incomplete data.

N/A – Not Applicable

Source: Neighborhood Business District Studies, Draft Background Report, May 7, 2004, Property Counselors

It's difficult to draw detailed conclusions because there are a relatively small number of single use developments in many of the zones, and those developments may have unique development determinants. At the most general level, however, it is true that in all zones the average square feet of site area per unit is higher for single purpose residential projects (and therefore the density is lower). However, in only two of the four zones shown, is the average unit size smaller.

While the data do not show conclusively that the density limits have resulted in larger units, the theoretical basis for the result remains. Any provision that distorts the response of housing supply to housing demand will reduce the amount of residential development that is supportable. Elimination of the density limit will eliminate that potential effect.

## Floor Area Ratios

The bulk of buildings in commercial zones is currently limited by such factors as allowable height, minimum parking requirements, upper story lot coverage, limits on residential densities in single use residential buildings, setbacks on the edges of residential areas, and limits on commercial densities in areas with height limits over 65 feet. The Neighborhood Business District Strategy proposes a gross FAR (floor area ratio) limit for all uses in place of the upper storage lot coverage limit of 64 percent for

residential. The limits on residential densities in single use residential structures would be eliminated as described earlier; and parking requirements will be reduced. The impact of the change to regulated FAR is considered here in terms of its effect on the amount of development allowed.

The floor area ratio is the ratio of total building area to total lot area. The draft recommendations identify the following FAR limitations according to the allowable height limit.

### Recommended Floor Area Ratios

Height Limit	30'	40'	65'	85'	120'	160'
Base	2.25	3.00	4.25	4.50	5.00	5.00
Maximum in Station Areas and Some Urban Centers	3.00	4.00	5.85	6.00	6.50	7.00

These allowable FAR's can be compared to the FAR's that could be achieved under current regulations.

### Theoretical Floor Area Ratio under Current Zoning

Height Limit	30'	40'	65'	85'	120'	160'
Allowable Floors						
All Commercial (@ 12')	2	3	5	7	10	13
Mixed Use (1 Commercial @ 12'; residential @ 9')	3	4	6	9	13	17
Associated FAR w/Residential @ 64%						
All Commercial	2.00	3.00	5.00	7.00	10.00	13.00
Mixed Use	2.28	2.92	4.20	6.12	8.68	11.24

The allowable FAR's under the proposal were set to be roughly equivalent to the extent of development currently resulting from a 64 percent upper level lot coverage regulation. As is evident from a comparison of the figures above:

- The allowable FAR's for all commercial building scenarios are lower than the equivalent FAR's possible under the current regulations.
- The allowable base FAR's for the mixed use building scenarios are roughly equivalent to the equivalent FAR's under current regulations for the 30', 40' and 65' height limits, but are less than the current equivalents for the 85', 120', and 160' height limits.

As a practical matter the FAR's permitted under the current regulations are higher than the FAR's of the selected projects described in the appendix to the Background Report.

30' Height	1.1 to 2.3
40' Height	1.1 to 2.45

65' Height

2.1 to 3.7

While there may be instances where the proposed changes would not allow a building of the bulk that is currently allowed, it will likely not be a common situation. The obvious impact of the proposed change will be on the increased flexibility in building design.



## Appendix 2

### NBDS PARKING AND TRAFFIC IMPACTS





# NBDS Parking and Traffic Impacts

## Technical Memorandum

January 2005

Prepared For:

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# TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Project: Seattle Neighborhood Business District Strategy

Subject: Parking and Traffic Impacts of Land Use Code Revisions

Date: January 6, 2005

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This memorandum presents information to support the SEPA Checklist for the Seattle Neighborhood Business District Strategy (NBDS). As part of the NBDS, the City of Seattle is evaluating changes to its Land Use Code, including changing some minimum parking requirements. The parking code changes are intended to balance parking needs in the neighborhood, support transit use, and make the Land Use Code easier to use. This memorandum summarizes and evaluates the potential impacts associated with the land use code and parking requirement revisions.

The proposed changes included as part of the NBDS would not result in significant impacts to traffic or parking. A few of the changes could result in small changes to traffic or parking demand; however, the overall result of the changes will be to encourage non-automobile and transit modes of transportation. The proposed changes are analyzed in more detail in this memorandum. The following includes a discussion of anticipated impacts associated with specific NBDS proposals, and if necessary, potential mitigation measures that should be considered by the City of Seattle to limit impacts.

## Map Retail and Commercial Nodes, Mixed Use Areas

### **Allow residential uses at ground level in NC2 and NCS. Remove NC/R and rezone to NC.**

While this change could result in some residential uses being developed in place of ground floor commercial, the overall effect to traffic and parking is expected to be negligible. A change in the type of parking demand—such as lower demand for short-term parking and higher demand for long-term parking—could occur in some locations. However, the relative magnitude of parking and traffic demand for residential uses is much lower than for the same amount of commercial space. For example, average rates in the Institute of Transportation Engineer's (ITE's) *Trip Generation* [ITE, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2003] and *Parking Generation* [ITE, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 2004] show that an average-size apartment unit (about 1,000-sf) generates approximately 0.51 PM peak hour trips and peak parking demand of 1.20 vehicles. The same size of commercial space generates higher levels of traffic and parking demand (1,000-sf of office space generates 1.49 PM peak hour trips and peak parking demand of 2.4 vehicles; 1,000-sf of retail space generates 3.75 PM peak hour trips and peak parking demand between 2.0 and 4.74 vehicles. It should be noted that, although the retail rates are based primarily on surveys of suburban locations rather than urban sites, they provide a reasonable relative comparison between the uses. Based on these comparisons, the proposed change is not expected to result in any adverse traffic or parking impacts.

## Height, Bulk, Density Standards

**Allow additional FAR to focus development in station areas and revitalization areas where current 64% limits have been removed.**

This change could increase the amount of residential units developed above the ground level. However, while there might be a higher number of units, the size of the units would likely be smaller (e.g., studio and one-bedroom units). As demonstrated in the Journey-To-Work surveys provided by the Puget Sound Regional Council from the year 2000 Census, these types of residential units in NC zones typically have tenants that use modes of travel other than single-occupant vehicles and also likely have lower auto ownership. As a result, this change is not expected to result in adverse impacts to traffic or parking.

## Development Standards

**Reduce driveways across main pedestrian streets, by applying current pedestrian-designation standards to all NC zones.**

This change could increase traffic on side streets and alleys. Where side-street driveways would be located in close proximity to an intersection, turn restrictions (e.g., right-in, right-out only) may be required. This could force some traffic into neighborhoods when accessing or exiting a site. Small projects that are exempt from SEPA analysis are likely to have small impacts on the side streets. Larger projects that are required to perform SEPA analysis (greater than 4,000 sf in the NC zones and greater than 12,000 sf in the C zones) should evaluate side-street operations and potential for cut-through traffic into residential areas as part of their SEPA process. Developers of individual projects that could generate enough traffic to create an impact would have to evaluate their own impacts. Therefore, mitigation would not be required for this code change.

## Use Standards

None of the proposed changes to the use standards are anticipated to result in adverse impacts to traffic or parking.

## Parking Requirements

**Lower parking requirements so that they are below average demand for parking in Seattle.**

The parking requirements would be consolidated and simplified for ease of use and interpretation. As part of the consolidation, the minimum parking requirements for some land use types would be changed to better reflect actual parking demand rates throughout the City of Seattle, and to encourage development consistent with the overall City and neighborhood goals. The proposed changes in parking requirements are shown in Table 1.

For all of the land use categories, larger projects (greater than 4,000 sf in the NC zones, greater than 12,000 sf in the C zones, and those that include parking of 20 or more spaces) would be subject to SEPA review. SEPA analysis should consider the individual demand characteristics of a project and the context of the site. Projects located in neighborhoods where there is limited on-street parking

available are more likely to provide enough on-site parking to make the project economically viable. Examples of this include downtown residential projects that are not required to provide any on-site parking, but provide ample on-site parking to meet their customer's and/or financial requirements. Although the vast majority of residents who live downtown walk and/or take transit to work, these residents still own cars that need to be parked. The combination of SEPA review and market forces will combine to mitigate potential adverse parking effects of most projects.

For smaller projects that are not subject to SEPA review or for developers who do not conform to market forces, the proposed code changes could result in modest parking impacts. The following section details the code changes shown in Table 1 and the potential effect.

**1.A. Sales and service, general.** This land use category applies to nearly all retail businesses. The minimum code requirement would change from 1-space-per-350-square-feet (sf) to 1-space-per-500-sf. While traditional Institute of Transportation Engineers' (ITE) rates indicate peak parking demand for retail space is about 1-space-per-282-sf, these rates are based on studies of suburban sites with little or no transit and non-automobile travel options. More relevant are actual rates observed in Seattle. The City of Seattle's Strategic Planning Office commissioned a study that was summarized in the *Seattle Comprehensive Neighborhood Parking Study Final Report* (August 2000). This report included results of parking supply and demand studies of 167 retail land uses in Seattle neighborhoods. These surveys showed retail uses provided an average supply of 2.6-spaces-per-1,000-sf and a demand of only 1.7-spaces-per-1,000-sf. The demand rate equates to 1-space-per-590-sf. Therefore, the proposed code change is consistent with observed demand rates in Seattle neighborhoods.

It should also be noted that the types and sizes of retail development that could occur without SEPA review (as mentioned above) would likely be intended to serve local customers such as building tenants and/or local residents. For these relatively small retail uses, auto-oriented trips are typically less than 35% of all trips. Therefore, the revised code requirement would still be consistent with expected demand and no new adverse parking impacts are expected.

**1.C. Eating and drinking establishments.** This land use category applies to restaurants, bars, and fast food businesses. The minimum code requirement would change from 1-space-per-200-sf to 1-space-per-250-sf. For an average-sized quality restaurant (ITE indicates an average of about 8,000-sf for this type of restaurant), the change in code would require a total of 8 fewer parking spaces. The *Seattle Comprehensive Neighborhood Parking Study Final Report* also included results of parking supply and demand studies of 57 restaurants in Seattle neighborhoods. These surveys showed restaurant uses provided an average supply of 4.9-spaces-per-1,000-sf and a demand of 3.7-spaces-per-1,000-sf. The demand rate equates to 1-space-per-270-sf. Therefore, the proposed code change is consistent with observed demand rates.

As was described for the sales and service category above, the types and sizes of restaurant development that could occur without SEPA review would likely be intended to serve local customers such as building tenants and/or local residents. The revised code requirement would be consistent with expected demand and no new adverse parking impacts are expected.

Table 1. Existing and Proposed Parking Requirements

Use	Proposed minimum parking required for new construction	Existing Requirement
<b>I. COMMERCIAL</b>		
A Sales and services, general	1 per 500 sq. ft.	1 per 350 sq. ft.
B Sales and services, heavy	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 2000 sq. ft.
C Eating and drinking establishments	1 per 250 sq. ft.	1 per 200 sq. ft.
D Lodging	1 per 4 rooms	Ranges from 1 per room to 1 per 4 rooms
E Entertainment	1 per 8 fixed seats or 1 per 100 sq. ft.	Generally 1 per 8 seats or 1 per 100 sq. ft.
F Sales and services, Automotive	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 1000 sq. ft. (1 per 350 sq. ft. for parts sales)
G Sales and services, Marine	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 1000 sq. ft. (1 per 350 sq. ft. for parts sales)
H Animal shelters and kennels	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 2000 sq. ft.
I Office	1 per 1000 sq. ft.	1 per 1000 sq. ft.
J Research and Development Laboratories	1 per 1500 sq. ft.	1 per 1000 sq. ft. or 1 per 1500 sq. ft. in South Lake Union
K Food processing and craft work	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 1000 sq. ft.
<b>II. TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES</b>		
A Light rail and monorail transit facilities	None	None
B Passenger terminals	1 per 100 sq. ft.	1 per 100 sq. ft.
C Transportation hubs	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 2000 sq. ft.
D Air transportation facilities	1 per 100 sq. ft.	1 per 100 sq. ft.
E Vehicle parking and storage		
1 Recreational marinas and commercial moorage	1 per 2 berths	1 per 75 to 1 per 140 lineal feet
2 Principal use parking	None	None
3 Dry storage of boats	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 2000 sq. ft.
4 Towing services	None	None
<b>III. UTILITIES</b>	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 2000 sq. ft.
<b>IV. MANUFACTURING</b>	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 2000 sq. ft.
<b>V. HIGH IMPACT USES</b>	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 2000 sq. ft.
<b>VI. STORAGE</b>	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 2000 sq. ft.
<b>VII. INSTITUTIONS</b>	Separate chart to be developed	No changes
<b>VIII. PUBLIC FACILITIES</b>	Separate chart to be developed	No changes
A Jails	None	
B Work-release centers	1 per 4 full-time staff members; plus 1 space per 5 residents	
<b>IX. RESIDENTIAL</b>	Generally 1 per unit in commercial areas	Range of 1 per unit to 1.5 per unit
X LIVE/WORK UNITS	1 per unit plus the general parking requirement for the appropriate non-residential space	1 per unit plus the general parking requirement for the appropriate non-residential space
<b>XI. PARKS, PLAYGROUNDS AND OPEN SPACE</b>	None	None
<b>XII. AGRICULTURAL USES</b>	1 per 2000 sq. ft.	1 per 2000 sq. ft.

**1.D. Lodging.** This land use category applies to hotels and motels. The code requirement would be consolidated to apply the existing rate of 1-space-per-4-rooms to all lodging. Traffic analyses conducted by Heffron Transportation, Inc. for hotels in Seattle determined that trip generation is much lower than for suburban hotels. In fact, trip generation rates were observed to be 25% of published ITE rates. The proposed code requirement for lodging is consistent with actual demand levels for hotels in Seattle. Therefore, no new adverse parking impacts are expected.

**1.F Vehicle sales and services, Automotive and 1.G Vehicle sales and services, Marine.** These land use categories apply to transportation related sales and services and includes space for parts sales inside those facilities. The code requirement would change from 1-space-per-1,000-sf to 1-space-per-2,000-sf and would change to include the spaces used for parts sales within the larger land use requirement. These changes are expected to have a negligible impact to parking. The amount of parking that is likely provided would be largely controlled by market conditions. Most, if not all, developments of this type would be large enough (propose 20 or more parking spaces) to require separate SEPA analysis. The space typically used for parts sales within larger vehicle sales and service facilities is minor and is primarily related to other activities on site. Therefore, the revised code requirement would still be consistent with expected demand and no new adverse parking impacts are expected.

**1.J. Research and Development Laboratories.** This land use category applies to uses such as medical research labs. The code requirement would change for all areas except in South Lake Union from 1-space-per-1,000-sf to 1-space-per-1,500-sf. The code requirement in South Lake Union is already 1-space-per-1,500-sf. This proposed change would be consistent with typical employment densities for research and development (R&D) facilities. In general, these types of facilities require more space per employee than office buildings. This is due to the additional equipment and multiple stations in R&D facilities (e.g., one researcher might have a lab and a separate office). For comparison, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) indicates that typical office buildings have 1 employee for each 300 square feet of space, while R&D facilities have 1 employee for each 500 square feet. The ratio of employees-to-space for office and R&D uses is consistent with the ratio of code required parking proposed by the City of Seattle. The office requirement would remain at 1-space-per-1,000-sf while the R&D requirement would change to 1-space-per-1,500-sf. Therefore, the revised code requirement would still be consistent with expected demand and no new adverse parking impacts are expected.

**1.K. Food processing and craft work.** This land use category applies to uses such as bakeries and caterers; custom woodworking and pottery studios. The code requirement would change from 1-space-per-1,000-sf to 1-space-per-2,000-sf. As described above for R&D uses, this proposed change would also be consistent with typical employment densities for food processing and craft work. These types of activities also require more space per employee than office buildings. This is due to the additional equipment and multiple stations in these facilities. Therefore, the revised code requirement would still be consistent with expected demand and no new adverse parking impacts are expected.

**2.E.1. Boat moorage.** This land use category would apply to facilities with recreational and/or commercial moorage. The code revision would change the minimum requirements from 1-space-per-75-lineal-feet for recreational moorage and 1-space-per-140-lineal-feet for commercial moorage to 1-space-per-2-berths for both. Heffron Transportation provided detailed parking analysis for the Port of Seattle's *Shilshole Bay Marina – Landside Renewal and Replacement SEPA Checklist Transportation Analysis* (Heffron Transportation, Inc., July 2003). These studies indicated that this marina, which is

predominately used for recreational moorage, has an existing peak parking demand rate of 0.74-spaces-per-berth. This peak parking demand was observed during summertime weekends and during large events at the marina. Based on parking demand counts performed during September 2002, typical weekday peak parking demand at the marina is lower—approximately 0.48-spaces-per-berth—and typically occurs after 7:00 P.M. The proposed code revision (which equates to 0.5-spaces-per-berth) is expected to result in adequate parking supply for boat moorage during typical weekday peak conditions. It should also be noted that since marinas would be developed or expanded within the shoreline and/or in environmentally sensitive areas, it is expected that all potential marina developments or expansions would be subject to SEPA review. This review would determine if adequate parking supply could be provided with the project. Therefore, the proposed code revision is not expected to result in any new adverse impacts.

**9. Residential - Multifamily.** This land use category applies to all multifamily residential buildings. The proposal would modify some parking code requirements based on location criteria. Requirements would be established for multifamily uses in commercial zones within Urban Centers and Station Area Overlay Districts, in commercial zones, within the University District Northwest Urban Center Village, and within the First Hill Urban Center Village. Multifamily uses within Urban Centers and Station Area Overlay Districts would have no minimum parking requirement. Multifamily uses in the other areas would range from 0.6 to 1.25 depending on the location, size, and number of bedrooms. Location-based requirements for the Seattle Cascade Mixed zone and the Pike/Pine Overlay District would be eliminated.

The proposed revisions would result in minor changes to the code requirements for multifamily uses and are not expected to result in adverse impacts to traffic or parking. The *Seattle Comprehensive Neighborhood Parking Study Final Report* included surveys of 62 separate residential sites which ranged in size from 31 to 62 units. The surveys found that the residential uses provided an average supply of 0.8-spaces-per-unit, but had a demand of only 0.6 spaces-per-unit. In addition, a recent study of Census data revealed that households in multifamily buildings have significantly lower car ownership rates than households in smaller buildings. Households in buildings with 5 or more units have, on average, 0.8 cars, and a median of 1 car per household (source: U.S. Census Bureau; Census 2000; *5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) Files*; Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Analysis, December 2004). Therefore, the revised code requirement would still be consistent with expected demand and no new adverse parking impacts are expected. In Urban Centers (areas such as First Hill where residents have the best access to goods and services), the market will likely determine the most appropriate parking supply to provide. In NC and C zones, developments with more than four units would also still be subject to SEPA review based on Director's Rule 23-2000

**Remove minimum parking requirements for urban centers and station areas and existing buildings.**

For Station Areas, this change would have no effect to on-street parking if parking around the station area is managed with time restrictions, parking meters, and/or residential parking zones (RPZ). Market conditions will likely set the parking supply for individual buildings. Managed on-street parking could affect existing employees who want free-long term parking; however, the need to manage parking would be related to the station impacts and not the change in the City's Land Use Code. Thus, no mitigation would be required for this code revision.



For Urban Centers such as First Hill, Uptown (Lower Queen Anne), the University District, and South Lake Union, on-street parking is already managed in varying degrees. Some of these areas have free time-restricted parking, some have meters, and some have RPZs on adjacent residential streets. The level of parking management will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure the most appropriate measures are in place. Meters may be needed in areas that are currently only time-restricted in order to ensure regular parking turnover for local businesses. RPZs may need to be expanded based on development and demand changes. To the extent necessary for project success and financing, developments will continue to provide parking based on market need. As mentioned for the station areas, the on-street parking management could affect existing employees who want free-long term parking; however, the removal of minimum parking requirements within these areas combined with on-street parking management will provide additional support and incentives for non-automobile travel to and from these areas and will help support Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) measures for employers. For developments in Urban Centers where the market does not require parking, the removal of requirements will facilitate and encourage lower cost development. It should also be noted that although Northgate is also an Urban Center, it has separate parking requirements under the Northgate Overlay, and those requirements will not be affected by these proposals. With ongoing on-street parking management by the City, this code revision is expected to strengthen non-automobile travel incentives to Urban Centers and benefit overall traffic conditions without adversely impacting short-term parking conditions.

**Remove requirements for additional parking in existing buildings undergoing a change in use when the change would result in a code-required increase of 20 or fewer parking spaces.**

Most change-of-use applications would be small, and would be for uses with similar parking rates. As a result, this change is expected to have a minimal impact to traffic and parking. The proposed code revision would allow these small changes of use to occur without additional review or provision of additional parking. However, for any changes of use proposed that would result in a code-required increase of more than 20 parking spaces, SEPA review would be triggered through Director's Rule 23-2000. Other changes of use (even if they do not result in a code required parking increase of more than 20 spaces) would also be subject to review based on those guidelines in Director's Rule 23-2000.

**Revise parking waivers for street-level non-residential uses in NC zones to encourage development of spaces appropriate for small businesses.**

The proposal would change the existing parking waiver from 2,500 square feet per use to 1,500 square feet per business for all NC zones. This change would simplify the way in which waivers are calculated in terms of size and use. The waivers are currently calculated on a per-use basis, which means that a building with two retail businesses must split the waiver between the businesses (this creates challenges when changes of use occur in a building). The proposed revision would apply the waiver to each individual business establishment.

The waiver size is being reduced to encourage spaces for small businesses. The City's public outreach found that new businesses most often look for spaces that are 1,500 square feet or smaller, and that it is very difficult to find spaces that small in Seattle. The waiver is intended to encourage the creation of small spaces that are attractive to start-up businesses. Depending on the type of business, a waiver

for the full 1,500 square feet would be equivalent to between 1 and 6 parking spaces. Since the overall size of a waiver is effectively being reduced, this change is not expected to create significant new parking or traffic impacts.

In some cases, a larger number of smaller businesses could be consolidated into one building such that the overall waiver might be larger than it would have been under the current code. The proposed change in the waiver could result in more or fewer parking spaces being required. For example, a building with three 2,500-sf spaces each with a different use (a bookstore, a restaurant and a doctor's office) would have qualify for waivers for each space and would be required to provide no parking. Under the proposed waiver revision, the same proposal would have to provide eight parking spaces. In contrast, a building with five 1,500-sf spaces, each of which has a retail sales and service business (e.g., clothing store, barber, shoe-repair business, music store, and a florist) would have to provide 10 spaces under the current code since only the first 2,500 sf of these retail uses would qualify for the waiver. With the proposed code revision, each of these five retail spaces would qualify for the waiver and the building would not be required to provide any parking spaces. It should also be noted that any project in an NC zone with more than 4,000 square feet of commercial space would be subject to SEPA review under guidelines in Director's Rule 23-2000. Therefore, larger projects will continue to be subject to additional parking and traffic review under SEPA.

**Set limits of 145 spaces of surface parking (would apply to all projects, equivalent to one acre, can build more than 145 spaces, but they have to be structured parking)**

This new limit would influence the type of parking—structured instead of surface parking—for projects building more than 145 spaces. This limit is not expected to result in new impacts to traffic or parking since the amount of parking is not expected to be affected. All projects that would be subject to this limit would also be required to prepare SEPA analysis to document potential impacts to traffic and parking. Therefore, no new adverse impacts to traffic or parking would occur as a result of this proposed limit.

**Establish bicycle parking requirements that are not tied to auto parking requirements.**

This change will better serve non-automobile uses that should be encouraged in the neighborhood business districts. No parking impacts would occur with this change.